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THE FORMAL AND MATERIAL ELEMENTS OF KANT'S ETHICS

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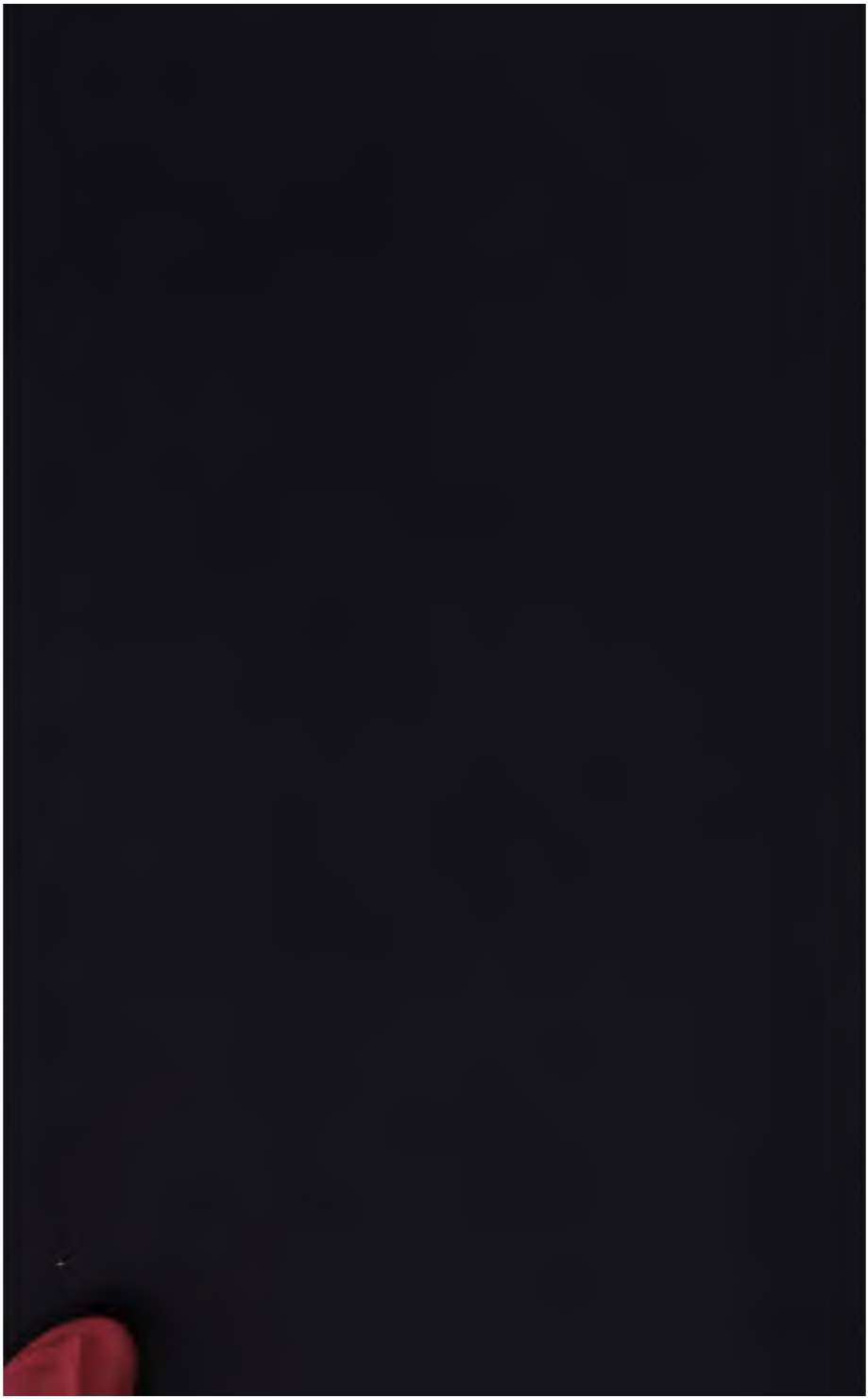

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THE FORMAL AND MATERIAL ELEMENTS
OF
KANT'S ETHICS

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I

INTRODUCTION

THE primal fact that strikes one in Kant's Ethics, leaving out of view the fact that they are a necessary part of his complete method, is that he is thoroughly animated by the spirit of Stoicism; and that further, in this spirit, he is aiming more particularly at a refutation of the contemporary sensationalistic schools. In accomplishing the double object called forth by these two facts, and in fitting his doctrines into the terminology of the critical method, he had the misfortune to express himself in terms peculiar to Logic; thereby provoking a merely logical refutation, and one, on that account, often wide of the mark and quite blind to the ethical truth conveyed.

The terminology thus adopted was that by which the elements of a science are classed under one of the two heads of Form or Matter. This division served Kant doubly thus: it allowed him to distinguish as the Greeks had done, between Reason, Will and Spirit on the one hand, and Sense, Impulse, Matter and Body on the other; at the same time by advocating an ethics of "form," he showed that he regarded the moral law as a product of Reason in contrast to the Moral Sense foundation of the English school. For, he thought, Ethics must proceed from reason; and to be Ethics, must give a *law*, the *a priori* product of *pure* reason; and which, therefore, can be only the mere concept or *form* of a law. On the other hand, a doctrine which ignores the mandatory character of virtue fills up the gap thus left by descriptions of virtue's pleasantness; in which case, all that is

accomplished is to make the objects of the will (the matter) pleasant, and their attainment desired; therefore we must rule out absolutely from Ethics the matter of desire.

In Kant's use of the word, there is but one derivation for the *matter* of desire; it is the sense-given, hence is particular, empirical and merely contingent. For "Form," on the other hand, we may find two sources, Reason and the Understanding, used to denote respectively the faculty which deals with Ideas not based on intuition, but produced from its own spontaneity, and that which has no conceptions except those derived from sensible intuition.

When he reached the period of his ethical writings, Kant had finished his investigation of the limits of the Understanding, and Reason became of first importance as a field of research. As a result, the Understanding falls into the background, and occupies a somewhat equivocal position. As a faculty of abstraction, it belongs to the formal world and is concerned with the *form* of knowledge. As opposed to the intelligible intuitionless world in which Reason dwells by its purely spontaneous nature, Understanding ranks with the sensible world of intuitions. The division of intelligible and sensible worlds is the one most prominently before Kant's mind in his Ethics. Nevertheless his phraseology is not so constant as not to allow of a frequent use of the division between Sensibility and Understanding. Form thus comes to have two distinct references. It may be (1) merely the universal to be arrived at by abstraction from the particulars given in intuition; (2) the *rational*, as distinct from the sensible and intelligible, and *not derived from intuition*. In the former sense, Kant is a conceptualist; though there is an intimation, in his conception of the Categories, that if the universal does not lie in the mind before the particular is presented in intuition, at least the mind is *ready beforehand* for such presentation.

In his Ethics, Kant is carried clear into the camp of Realism: the universal, as a law, exists apart from the particular and can never be found in the particular. *But it exists so only in our conception of a rational being.*

This last qualification denotes the psychological aspect of Kant's attitude, and is really the solution of the whole question as to his position on this point, into which his distinction between Form and Matter compels us to inquire. For while Kant uses this division as thoroughly as any scholastic could desire, he never takes the scholastic's ontological point of view. It is not to decide priority or reality of existence that leads him to make this abstraction, but the necessity of denoting the different psychological sources of ideas, of their causes, and of concepts. Where or how the moral law exists, Kant did not care to inquire. That it existed, prior to all experience in the conception of the very nature of a rational being, was enough. *So far* it had reality as certainly as did the Ideas of Plato. Without being at all concerned, therefore, in the ontological quarrel of Nominalism and Realism, Kant's Ethics denote a strongly realistic standpoint.

The difference between Matter and Form, in Kant's conception of them, is the same as in Aristotle's; but he never uses the terms in the Aristotelian sense. Instead of form and matter being coeternal principles of things, they are now elements of knowledge. Form is that element supplied by Understanding and Reason; matter is that given through the senses. The sense-given can never be anything but the particular, contingent and *à posteriori*. The necessary and universal, from its very nature, must be the product of the reason, of the pure reason *à priori*.

That place where Kant comes nearest to the scholastic meaning of the terms is in his distinction between formal and

erial knowledge and in the division of the sciences on this

basis. This is at the very beginning of his work; all the conceptions are present that appear at any time, but Kant is here insisting on the *à priori* character of the one, the empirical, of the other sort of knowledge. Accordingly that idea is not so strongly brought out, which advancingly distinguishes his use of the terms from the traditional one. This is the conception that matter and form are not eternal principles of the same thing. There is, on the contrary, nothing in Kant to prevent the supposition that they may exist apart, though, indeed, form without matter would be empty, and matter without form would have no meaning for us. Aristotle's form and matter do not exclude each other: form is matter in a higher stage of development; matter is form in a lower stage. In Kant's conception they are fixed; form is, as it were, the mental mold through which matter passes in its cognition by the mind. Form is the determination; matter, that which is determined.

We have, therefore, two different conceptions of form, the traditional and the Kantian. The difference may be illustrated thus: in the scholastic meaning, the form of a sentence is that determination of words which is essential to their becoming a sentence, *i. e.*, there must be a subject, a predicate verb, and if the verb be transitive, an object, and so on. The matter of such a sentence is the specific subject, predicate verb and object. In Kant's use, the matter is both this form and matter, if these together form part of a cognition. The form is that in the conceiving mind whereby they are cognized; *it is that by which mind legislates for nature.*

Thus, the Categorical Imperative is the form of the law. In the former sense, it is comparable to the formal syllogism. That is, it is not the law, but the form in which all maxims on which one acts must be molded in order that their consistency may be tested: just as all reasoning must be submitted to the formal syllogism in order to test its validity.

In the second, or Kantian use, the form of the law *is* a law: a law because it expresses moral necessity, and, being necessary, proceeds *à priori* from reason alone; the form of a law because it is given by pure reason, and is, therefore, merely the *idea* of a law in general.

In Kant's own use we may distinguish two sorts of form; the first is the category, whose correlative matter are the objects of sensible intuition. Form and matter in this sense are the subject-matter of physics, regarded as the science of the whole realm of nature and speculations thereon. Besides the category as a form of judgment, the mind also deals in Ideas for which no sensible intuition can possibly be found. On this account Reason in its speculative use, *i. e.* the Understanding, rejects them as elements of knowledge at all: they are "conceptions without perceptions," and consequently empty. Reason as deliberative Will, on the other hand, settles the account of such Ideas very differently by making them the foundation stones of rational morality. The understanding can deal only with the materials provided it by the sensibility. Rational Will, on the contrary, produces its Ideas from its own spontaneity. It is therefore absurd to attempt to find, corresponding to these forms, a matter in the meaning previously given the term, namely, the sense-given. We must find a new and broader definition for matter.

It is the very nature of the Ideal Conceptions of the reason to be realized. "In order to extend a pure cognition practically, there must be an *à priori purpose* given, that is, an end as object of the will." [1] That is, we may call this purposed end the *matter* of an Ideal. We see, therefore, that both understanding and reason have an object (matter); but that of the former is Gegenstand, the given in intuition, that of the latter is Zweck, "an object possible of realization through Freedom" (spontaneity). From this point of view

the department of thought under which the Ideas fall is that of purpose, of ends to be attained; which is Ethics. Under Ethics, consequently, is understood all that does not come within the domain of nature (physics), where purpose is not possible. Of the nature of the Ideal as the subject-matter proper of Ethics, we shall learn more in the consideration of the chapter on "the Object of pure practical Reason," and in the Dialectic.

The length to which Kant carried the abstraction of the *à priori* and empirical elements of knowledge, and in ethics especially, his passion to get a binding universal, abstracted altogether from time-given circumstances, forced him into a position continually more marked by realism. His hatred of the sense-given increased correspondingly. So that "materialistic" has for him all the meaning attached in common parlance to that term as opposed to intellectual or spiritual. It represents all that is base and sensualistic in principles. This sense is not brought out in a well defined way, but is seen most clearly in such affirmations as: "all *material* practical principles as such are of one and the same kind, and come under the general principle of *self-love* or private happiness;"[2] "the direct opposite of the principle of morality (obtains), when the principle of private happiness is made the determining principle of the will."[3] This bias led Kant to limit almost altogether the word matter to the sense-given, although it includes any object, whether of thought or sense.

Formal Ethics is the product of pure practical reason *à priori*. To find the elements of it we must analyze the term "morality;" to establish its reality and authority we must proceed synthetically. The latter task is the Critique's. The former is that of the
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necessarily be found

s to be regarded as the science of Law and Duty. To this analysis we will now proceed.

[1] Abbott's Kant, 4th ed., p. 231.

[2] *Abbott*, p. 108.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 124; Kirchman, K. d. prac. Ver., S. 41.

[4] I have throughout chosen to call the "Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysic of Morals" by the first word of the German title.

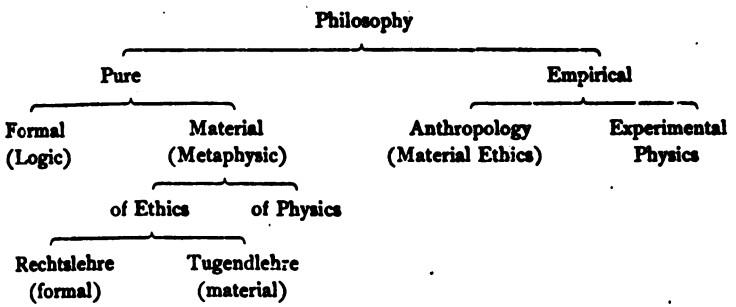
II

THE GRUNDLEGUNG: FORMAL PRESUPPOSITIONS OF MORALITY

WE are immediately introduced to the formal and material as elements of knowledge by the statement that it was on them as a basic principle that Greek philosophy divided knowledge into the three departments of Physics, Ethics and Logic. The definitions here given show that Kant already intends to support the conclusions later reached in the Critique of Practical Reason, and foreshadowed in that of the Pure Reason; namely, that Physics is the science of Nature; Ethics of the supersensible (corresponding to Greek "Metaphysics"); that the latter can establish those Ideas of reason to which Metaphysics had failed to give reality. Logic is the underlying science which prescribes how one must think in the other two; *i. e.* it supplies the form. While thus identifying his use of formal and material with the Greek, Kant from the beginning uses the terms in his own fashion by adding the psychological element which had been absent from the former meaning. For logic is now not only the philosophy of forms, but of forms of *the understanding and of reason:* besides being empty, it must come *à priori* from pure reason. Otherwise it would not be, as it is, valid for all thought and capable of demonstration.

When such a pure philosophy is applied to definite objects of the understanding, as found in Ethics and Physics, it is called Metaphysic. Metaphysic is thus material because applied to a specific object; but is also formal, inas-

much as it is not empirical, and is a systematization of the rational parts of physics and ethics. Tabulating Kant's statements, we have the following division of sciences as regards their form and matter:



It is seen that in Kant's opinion there are two metaphysics, those of ethics and physics; and in each of the sciences there can be but one metaphysic. The division of Ethics into Rechtslehre and Tugendlehre (formal and material) is made in the Metaphysic of Ethics, and we have no concern with it at present.

The intent of this subdividing is to bring out Kant's conception that in formal (pure) ethics only can a law, necessary and universal, be found. Any principle that needs time-given conditions to develop and establish it, and cannot, therefore, be justified *à priori*, is material and not able to furnish a necessary law.

Of the metaphysic of Ethics, the subject-matter is the Will; not the will generally, as treated in psychology, but a possible, pure will. And the purpose of the metaphysic is the finding of the supreme canon of morality, a necessary and universal law, *the ground of whose à priority in a more explicitly ethical sense is its necessity to moral experience.*

The method adopted by Kant to attain his end is to find by analysis all that is contained, presupposed that is, in the

term *rational morality*. This analysis will furnish the foundation of a metaphysic of morals. The concepts found to inhere in "morality" will be such as are necessarily determined before there can be any morality; *i. e.*, the *formal conditions* of morality. To find these conditions is the task of the "Grundlegung." The subsequent proof of the real existence of morality will be the work of the Critique.

The first condition of morality, that which conditions all others, is the Good Will.[1] The Good Will is absolute good. As such, it is formal; that is, a possible will which sets forth what the actual will ought to be, and thus determines the formal conditions of a will's becoming good. Not to violate the requirements of formal morality, it must be a will which gives only *universal* laws, being indeterminate as regards specific objects and containing the mere form of volition.[2] By "absolute" Kant means the unconditioned, of which he gives two definitions:[3] (1) the supreme unconditioned condition which is the condition of all others and is not subordinate to any; (2) that whole which is not a part of a greater whole of the same kind (the unrelated). He applies the former definition to the Good Will: it is the supreme good and the condition of every other (without which they could not exist), but is not the sole and complete good.[4] "A good will is good not because of what it performs, but simply by virtue of the volition, that is, it is good in itself."[5] Not that it is unrelated, but that its goodness is not in the least affected by its relation to anything else; and that the fact that it attains material good is not what makes its volition good. The will can become formal good only through a formal reason (that is, one abstracted from ends), namely, the fact that is the unconditioned condition of all other principles of pure morality.[6]

In opposition to this formal good men have tried to uphold a material good based on the empirical principle of

Happiness. Their position is refuted by the fact of the existence of reason and its office, which is not the attainment and preservation of happiness. The Will is not at first defined further than to distinguish it from wish;[7] and to affirm that it acts according to concepts or principles, and is consequently a deliberative will or practical reason.[8] In the Metaphysic of Ethics a distinction is made between rational and elective will. The elective will is of two kinds, *human* which is merely *affected* by sensible desire, and *animal* which is altogether determined by such.[9] "Will" at first has a narrower meaning, being denied to all but rational beings; and being indeed the faculty of acting according to principles. Later, the Rational Will alone is the practical reason, and gives *laws;* elective will gives *maxims.* Elective will alone is free; rational will is neither free nor unfree. Animals have no free will, being determined by physical impulses. Rational will through its laws, which become subjectively the maxims of the elective will, controls the latter; or would do so were it not weakened by disuse and submission to the inclinations.

Proceeding from the conception of the Good Will as the first presupposition of morality, Kant takes up the notion of Duty. The idea of Duty involves that of a will;[10] unless there be a cause able to choose its own ends there can be no responsibility for results. An act to be moral must be done from a sense of duty, not from inclination; and such an act derives its moral worth not from the matter, the end in view, but altogether from the principle on which one acts. Duty is opposed to inclination, and has no pleasantness connected with it; reluctance to accept the obligation being one of its essentials.[11] Kant asserts that consciousness of his moral worth, *i. e.*, that he can act on principles in obedience to Duty, is man's highest good;[12] but affirms also that one cannot be certain of this worth, since he cannot tell whether he

is acting from Duty alone; "we cannot observe the maxims themselves, not even always in ourselves."[13]

Duty is defined in terms of Law, which is the next step in the analysis. For Duty is but a species of the wider term Law; a law that applies only to free rational beings. "Duty is the necessity of acting from respect for the law."[14] This duty is a conception of formal morality; it is not derived from experience, and without it no moral experience is possible. That it is a *conception*, and one *à priori*, involves a contradiction of the English School, which had made it a sense. Later, in the Metaphysic of Ethics, Kant distinguishes further between *formal* and *material* Duty. The former is obligation, "the necessity of a free action under a categorical imperative of reason."[15] Material duty "is the *action* to which a person is bound. It is therefore the matter of obligation."[16]

The notion of Law is implied in that of Duty, as the latter follows on the conception of the Good Will. "The notion of duty stands in immediate relation to a law,"[17] and "is in itself already the notion of a constraint of the free elective will by the law."[18] For Kant, Ethics is the science of Law; of a law expressing itself concretely in the single word, *Duty*. That is the form every law must take in order to have its weight as a *moral* law. It is *à priori*, one being not even a moral being till he has experienced it. To be moral, one must have a sense of duty *to start with*, is his dictum.

"A law (a moral practical law) is a proposition, which contains a categorical imperative (a command)."[19] Such a proposition is objective and universal—a principle for all rational nature. There are also subjective principles, called maxims. They are the principles the individual chooses for himself. If his choice of a principle is in accord with universal law, the maxim becomes an objective law subjectively practical, and the resulting act is *legal*. To be *moral* it

must be done for the sake of the law as well as in conformity to it. A maxim based on desire is material, incapable of universality, and immoral. Accordingly, we have the command: "Act on a maxim which can also hold good as a universal law. Every maxim which is not capable of being so is contrary to morality."[20] If the law is to be *à priori*, it must be separated from everything empirical and material. "A practical precept which contains a material (and therefore empirical) condition must never be reckoned a practical law."[21] Kant rather gives the impression that a maxim is due to the prompting of inclination and wants. This results from his desire to emphasize the fact that such a maxim cannot be a law. On the contrary, however, the law itself is a maxim, inasmuch as it cannot become specific except through the use by the will of a maxim. But a maxim cannot be a law, and the will is immoral, if sensible desire is the motive. The only way that a maxim (as principle) can become a formal law is that it have no other other source in the will than a sense of duty; any other motive would not come from reason, but from a desire for an object of the senses, and hence would not be conceptual or formal.

The peculiarity of the *view* we take of the law is that we *respect* it. Respect is a feeling; but it is not a species of sensible desire. It depends on the conception of the law, merely as to its form, not on account of any object, as do all other feelings. It is therefore formal, and necessary to morality. "Respect is a *tribute* which we cannot refuse to merit, whether we will or not."[22]

The moral law is a *formal* determining principle of action by pure practical reason. At the same time, it is a *material* objective determining principle of the objects of actions as called good and evil; it is also a subjective determining principle, that is, a motive.[23] That is to say, it determines formally whether the will is good or evil; materially, whether

the end is good or not; and is also a motive to the fulfillment of the law. The *formula* of the law is repeated many times, and in various forms according to the point under consideration. As we shall see, they reduce themselves to three. The first and fundamental statement of it is: Act so that the maxim of your will may be by your will a universal law. This is in Kant's view the only valid principle of a law which is to be merely the idea of a law in general; and is on that account pure and formal, not admitting any empirical (sensible) motive and not having an end in view. For it "does not concern the matter of the action or its intended result, but its form and the principle of which it is itself a result."[24]

There is an end in view, the attainment and preservation of universal law. But this is a logical not an ethical end, *i. e.*, it is a test of truth, not a state of being to be arrived at. If it were ethical, Kant would be involved in the inconsistency of making social morality (for that is the seemingly implied purpose of the law) of chief importance in his system. At first sight, it seems intended the law shall operate by developing in the individual a large sense of responsibility, and then throwing on him, as it were, the legislation of the universe. But in its strictest interpretation, the law is more formal than that, and demands only logical consistency: a will always impelled by reason alone, and conduct not varying to suit the behest of contingent desires.

The law as stated above is called technically the Categorical Imperative. Besides it there are hypothetical imperatives. These, of whatever kind, are material, because looking to a specific end, and hence have no place in pure morality. All the Imperatives are summarized in three classes; two which are material, the technical and the pragmatic or prudential, and the moral, which alone is formal.

§ The question now arises, How are these imperatives pos-

ing to his own analogy from logic; there is, however, an ethical truth in his doctrine which we hope to discover further on; consideration of it is postponed out of regard for the fact that Kant probably became aware of it only as he gradually realized the weakness of his more formal doctrine. This point is certain, that in Kant's opinion the goodness of the will consists in its consistency with something or other; just at present it is the consistency of its maxims with universal law: this constitutes moral necessity.

The question then naturally arises, Is this our notion of the content of obligation, that a rational being must always will according to universal law? "Is it a necessary law for all rational beings that they should always judge of their actions by maxims of which they can themselves will that they should serve as universal laws?"[29] Two interpretations, never distinguished by Kant, can be given to this question. For him, duty is the moral law, *in concreto*. Now the fundamental idea of a law is that it shall always command the same thing. But command different things is precisely what duty does do; and what it never entered Kant's head to allow that it does. If, therefore, we put the above question in the form, Does the conception of a rational being involve that he should always act as the sense of duty directs? we may answer in the affirmative, *universally*, without binding ourselves always to will the same thing. From his failure to see, or to allow, the distinction just pointed out between law and duty, Kant bound himself to a conception of goodness at which common sense revolts, namely, that unchanging consistency is the only fit realization of human dignity.[30]

If, however, it is a law for all rational beings that they should always will universally, and this is our notion of obligation, then "it must be connected (altogether *à priori*) with the very conception of the *will* of a rational being."[31]

conception of "the obligation of the will which the imperative expresses," is morally an unconditional *necessity*. And moral necessity consists in this, that one *must* will as though willing universally.[18]

It is to be remembered that from the merely logical point of view the categorical imperative in conformity with its formal and empty character is not a law, but the *principle* on which one acts morally, the form which a maxim must take in order to be a law: just (as before stated) as the formal syllogism is the mode in which all reasoning can be presented, and must be, if its validity is to be tested; so every maxim on which one acts (not every action) must be able to take this universal form in order to be formally moral. But such morality would be *only* formal; it would not be material, any more than a formally valid syllogism is a test of material truth. Or to take an analogy from grammar, any sentence correct or incorrect, so it be a sentence, can be put into a diagram (universalized); but when it has been diagrammed you have merely determined whether it is. a sentence or not. If it it is grammatically incorrect to start with, it remains so without regard to the universal form. The fact is so plain as to lead one to think that Kant must have meant something else by his appeal to the form of the law. Kant avoids the difficulty thus made apparent by denying that there is such a thing as material morality. To take circumstances, results and what-not into consideration is to destroy the proper function of Ethics. If, we ask, the goodness of the will is not to be learned from its results, the tree is not to be known by its fruits, what test can be furnished? An immoral maxim, he replies, will contradict itself; consistency is the test of goodness. One may still object, however, that to learn that an evil maxim is self-destructive, whether general or particular, one must go outside the form. This is to interpret Kant in the narrowest sense, accord-

These two formulæ (which are merely the objective and subjective sides of the same principle) need another to complete them; for if the individual must make himself an end, and at the same time will as though his maxim were to become universal law, there must be a harmony between these two necessities. This is found in the idea of the will of every rational being as a *universally* legislating will; which idea alone can show the harmony of the subjective end with universal practical reason, and is therefore the only proper conception of a rational being. In the case of volition from duty all interest is renounced, and it is this fact alone that allows us to conceive of the will as *universal* legislator: for the universality of the law deprives its legislator of any special interest in it arising from self-love and the desire to gratify the same. It follows from these principles that while laws of duty are universal, they are of the subject's own giving: this is the supreme ethical principle of *Autonomy*. When one acts from interest he is not giving laws to himself, but is being dictated to by something extraneous to his reason. When such foreign influence is absent, the principle is one of Autonomy.

In the final analysis the categorical imperative takes on three forms, each of which involves the other two. In order to be sure as to the rightness of his volition, it is convenient for one to reduce his maxim to all three formulæ, and thus put it to three tests. The difference between them is as follows: The first is the *form* of a maxim, and is expressed thus: Act as though your maxim were to become universal *law*. The second is the *matter:* Treat humanity as an *end* in itself. The third is the completion (Bestimmung) of these: Act as though your will were the *universal* legislative will.[36]

By the foregoing treatment the principles of Ethics have been reduced to three; of which the first alone, Kant thinks,

had been previously discovered: (1) Man is subject by duty to laws; (2) the laws are all *of his own giving;* (3) they are universal.[37] The elements of formal ethics as we gather them from these three principles and from the preceding discussion, are the Good Will, Duty as the ethical form of Law, and Autonomy. These are *à priori*, necessary and universal, and *ideal or formal products of pure reason.*

Kant has not yet proven that autonomy exists, or that a categorical imperative is possible; (this requires a critique, being an analogue to the question, How is knowledge possible?). He has merely endeavored to analyze the conception of morality, and having found these elements existing in it *à priori*, now asks *ad hominem*, If morality has any reality, in what does it lie, if not in its universality and a priority?[38] This completes the first two sections of the Grundlegung. In the concluding portion, Kant deals with the conception of Autonomy or Freedom in so far as it is necessary to do so in order to prepare the mind for the problem of the Critique. Kant's conception of Freedom as here brought out is that of a determination of the will by reason alone, *i. e.* a formal determination. This is possible only through the power of the will to be a spontaneous cause independent of foreign determining causes. There is no alternative choice however: "the unconditional command leaves the will no liberty to choose the opposite."[39] In order that there may be formal morality at all, this determination of the will by a formal principle must be a reality; freedom must exist. Such determination by the form of the law is the condition also on which one may regard his maxims as practical universal laws.[40] In short, Kant contends that the will is not governed by physical causation (through sensible desires); but through freedom, by reason. This is accomplished by noumenal causality, one taking effect without reference to time-conditions. The apparent contradiction in the concep-

tion of freedom is this: that as noumenon one must regard himself as lawgiver through the spontaneity of his will as a free cause; while as phenomenon he must look upon himself as subject to laws of natural causation and of morality. As a free legislator in the noumenal world, one's acts tend to conform to the autonomy of the will; but being also a sensible phenomenon, it becomes possible for the dictates of reason to be issued as an imperative "ought."[41]

Though we thus assume the supersensible world, we can think it as to its formal conditions only:[42] for noumenal causality is merely an empty conception, and formal, not being based on sensible intuition. Nevertheless, every being that cannot act, except under the idea of such causality (freedom), is just for that reason in a practical point of view really free.[43] The *objective* reality of freedom is shown in intentions.[44] The formal condition of the determination of a *free* will by reason alone is Autonomy.[45] But to explain how this determination is possible, how a mere *formal* principle (the moral law) can of itself supply a spring without a *matter* (a sensible impulse or an end to be attained) is beyond human reason.[46] For pure reason contains as its matter knowledge of objects, and as form the practical law of the universal validity of its maxims. If knowledge be abstracted from the reason, it is impossible to conceive of anything left which can serve as spring: yet this is what formal morality demands of us to accept.[47]

With the Idea of Freedom ends the analysis: it has shown that the conditions of morality are a *Good Will*, which secures morality to itself by the obedience of its maxims to *Duty*, conceives by reason its maxims as *Universal Laws*, and effects its ends through *Freedom*. The problem is to establish freedom as a reality: this is the work of the Critique.

[1] *Abbott*, p. 9. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 63. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 206.

[4] *Abbott*, p. 12. [5] *Ibid.*, p. 10.

[6] It may well be asked if this can mean anything else than that the will is absolute good because it produces, and is necessary to good results. Kant would reply that, in any case, humanity has a worth which not only makes its good volition necessary to good results, but marks itself out as the only truly good object.

[7] *Abbott*, p. 10. Here, however, it is the goodness of the will that is said to be more than a wish.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 29. [9] *Ibid.*, p. 268. [10] *Ibid.*, p. 13.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 296. [12] *Ibid.*, p. 256. [13] *Ibid.*, p. 327.
[14] *Ibid.*, p. 16. [15] *Ibid.*, p. 278. [16] *Ibid.*, p. 279.
[17] *Ibid.*, p. 299. [18] *Ibid.*, p. 299. [19] *Ibid.*, p. 283.
[20] *Ibid.*, p. 282. [21] *Ibid.*, p. 122. [22] *Ibid.*, p. 169.
[23] *Ibid.*, p. 168. [24] *Ibid.*, p. 33. [25] *Ibid.*, p. 34.
[26] *Ibid.*, p. 35. [27] *Ibid.*, p. 38. [28] *Ibid.*, p. 38.
[29] *Ibid.*, p. 44.

[30] There is one place where the distinction is made, perhaps unconsciously, at any rate at the expense of what we may call legal (or logical) formalism. This in the *Remark*, p. 115 of *Abbott*: here universality (logical form) is not the test of rightness, but this office is performed by the sense of duty, or conscientiousness, as distinct from mere universality. It is a hint of the difference between Law and Duty that impels Kant to distinguish between civil duties and those of virtue in the Metaphysic of Ethics.

[31] *Abbott*, p. 14. [32] *Ibid.*, p. 45. [33] *Ibid.*, p. 46.

[34] *Ibid.*, p. 47; the translation being somewhat altered.

[35] *Ibid.*, p. 47. [36] *Ibid.*, p. 54. [37] *Ibid.*, p. 51. [38] *Ibid.*, p. 64.

[39] *Ibid.*, p. 37. This refers only to the power to choose another command (if one wishes to be moral); it says nothing of power to choose either one of two courses.

[40] *Ibid.*, p. 114. [41] *Ibid.*, p. 73. [42] *Ibid.*, p. 79.
[43] *Ibid.*, p. 67. [44] *Ibid.*, p. 146. [45] *Ibid.*, p. 81.
[46] *Ibid*, p. 81. [47] *Ibid.*, p. 82.

III.

THE CRITIQUE OF PRACTICAL REASON.

THE purpose and plan of this work differ fundamentally from those of the Grundlegung. The latter is the analysis of the conceptions inevitably contained in morality as Kant conceived it to be found in "popular moral philosophy;" this is to prove or disprove the real existence of morality by proving or disproving the reality of freedom.

In thus dealing with freedom we do more than establish morality; we give reality also to a rational idea, freedom, in the category of causality. In so doing we give objective reality also to all the other categories, but only so far as they stand in necessary connection with the moral law.[1] The Critique, therefore, besides being a contribution toEthics, is a continuation of the epistemology of the Critique of Pure Reason. Knowledge, which in that work had been confined to phenomena, is here (as certitude) extended to the supersensible in so far as its formal conditions are concerned. In this work also reality is given to the ideas of God and immortality as conditions of the *application* of the will to its *à priori* object.

The faculty by which reality is given to these supersensible ideas is the will, or practical reason, "a faculty either to produce objects corresponding to ideas, or to determine ourselves to the effecting of such objects."[2]

It is much more difficult to understand the movement of Kant's thought in the Critique than in the Grundlegung. In the latter, certain preliminary difficulties being overcome, it

is not hard to see through the gradations of the three sections and the way in which the empty concepts are developed one from the other till "morality is finally reduced to the idea of freedom." In the Critique, however, Kant's historical position must be remembered; as in the first Critique, it must be borne in mind that Kant was a pupil of Leibnitzian Rationalism, forced to face the difficulties offered by British empiricism. His "will" is a *rational* will, not a development from the feelings. Reason is the highest faculty of man, and as such and on account of the rebellious nature of the passionate desires, has a right to dictate to the inclinations. On the other hand he denies most emphatically the theses of the most worthy (from his point of view) of the Empirical Schools, namely, the advocates of the "moral sense." These were in brief the assertion, of the existence of an innate sensory faculty inclining man to a love of the good, without regard to his own advantage; that this faculty is independent of the will, and that man is naturally good. These positions Kant has in mind all through the Critique; their psychological foundation is discussed and somewhat is conceded to them in the chapter on "Motives;" and he specifically denies them in the four Theorems and the Problems and Remarks, with which the Analytic opens.

The most important fact to be observed is the relation of Kant's Ethics to his Epistemology. In Ethics he does not occupy the critical standpoint at all. So far as the supremacy of Reason is concerned, he is still a faithful Wolffian. As Hume did not find an intuitional ethics inconsistent with an empirical psychology, so Kant does not find a rationalistic ethics inconsistent with the middle standpoint of his theory of knowledge. Besides the use of the two faculties (Sensibility and Understanding) as sources of knowledge, of which he had said that "neither of them is to be regarded as superior to the other," he now finds another

use for the second, namely, that of producing concepts whose emptiness is no discredit to them. Nay, they lose all efficiency, all worth, if they be in any degree mixed with the matter of sense-perception. That supremacy of the reason which he specifically rejects in the formation of constitutive knowledge, he brings back—strengthened by its isolation—in the regulative science of Ethics. In this science, therefore, he remains a true Wolffian.

In the Critique the terms Form and Matter are more markedly developed into the peculiarly Kantian use of them. That is, it is the fact that it is an *a priori* product of pure reason rather than its universality that marks the form. Perhaps this is the result of the strong emphasis given to the notion of matter as the given in sensation. This however is only matter as it is presented in intuition to the faculty of *desire*. But Kant limited the name material to the practical principles which presuppose the object of desire as the ground of determination of the will, and thereby showed that his ordinary conception of matter was of the sense-given. Nevertheless, just as readily might the name of material have been bestowed on any theory which presupposed an object, whether of desire, or of will, or any other faculty, as the ground of determination of the will.

To escape this possibility, and to limit the name material to sensationalistic theories, Kant asserts that in a theory of pure autonomy the concept of the good (the matter) is evolved only after the law has issued; he wished thereby also to escape controversy as to whether the will had been determined by the law or by the idea of the good (*i. e.*, formally or materially). In this difficulty Kant does not avail himself of the escape provided him by his argument in the Grundlegung. His position is this: he has declared all material practical principles to be, *ipso facto*, contrary to morality. But a rational being would destroy his own

rationality to act without a purpose, an object, in view; to have such a purpose is to act on a *material* principle. Kant escapes by asserting that in a moral act the law must determine the will before the object, whether one of desire or not, be presented; he thus secures in theory a formal determination. What he might have done was to have declared the Good and the Law to be absolutely identical. This course was open to him from his argument in the Grundlegung, where his second formula of the categorical imperative in effect was an affirmation of the fact that one may will morally and at the *same* time will an end.

I have said that when Kant speaks of "matter," his usual thought is of the sense-given. This came naturally, and particularly because the given in sensation must always be particular and contingent; and on that account this notion of matter is closest allied to the Aristotelian conception with which Kant was unconsciously trying to keep in touch. For though the Summum Bonum or any other object of the will, because it is an object, is material; yet it exists only as an unrealized idea, a general term without content; and hence is removed from the traditional notion of matter. This very fact, however, that the Summum Bonum is a matter, is a sufficient refutation of Kant's second Theorem in the Critique, viz., that all material practical principles as such are of one and the same kind, and come under the general head of self-love or private happiness. Because it is only by a departure from his own use of the terms that a universal end, as the Summum Bonum is, can be so classified; nor in this case could the realization of the Good be commanded as a duty.

The difference between Kant's and the traditional conception of form and matter is further seen in this confusion of the *summum bonum* as both formal and material. In the latter conception it is formal only. Kant was not primarily

seeking the universal law, but what in his opinion is identical therewith, namely, the absolute. It was not a universal *Thou shalt* that he sought, but an unconditional THOU *shalt* addressed to each individual. The maxim of the will must unconditionally be conformed to a universal law. He regarded this as the necessity demanded by the law, and accordingly looked on universality and absoluteness as the same. Except in an ideally good society, a universal and an unconditional command will coincide only under one condition, that the circumstances be exactly the same in two or more given instances. As this never occurs, it would practically destroy the universality of an absolute command to recognize such a condition as legitimate. Kant might have granted it, however, without disadvantage, had he not consecrated certain particular commands as universals; thus confounding the material with the formal.

At the present time, when so much stress is laid upon mitigating circumstances, probably no one will uphold that for a law to be unconditionally binding on one, it must at all times and in all places be binding on all others who are subject to the idea of Law. That it is an absolute and also universal law for all rational beings to do their duty is a certainty; but this does not involve the alternative that specific acts are always duties or else not at all. Taking this supposed identity of universality and absoluteness as a fact, Kant puts it to practical use by making the former the *test* of the latter. He does this by asking what the result will be should one act according to a certain precept. The outcome of an act is not intended thereby to be the ground of the duty; and yet one inevitably feels that the result is more than a mere test of the rightness of an act; but for it to be more is the destruction of the unconditionality of the given duty.

Kant asserts that empirical principles will contradict each

other. Apparently it never occurs to him to ask whether the same be true concerning universal maxims. The question is not, however, as argued by some, whether universal maxims willed unconditionally will conflict. The problem is the deeper one of the superior importance of different *bases* for duties; one ground being upheld by some, another by others. Kant's thesis is that the rational being's first duty as regards ends is to himself. This he owes to himself as a rational being; and it having been seen to, virtue will follow as its own reward. In all circumstances (universally), and at any price (unconditionally), man is to protect the humanity represented in himself, for "morality, and humanity as capable of it, alone has worth." No supposed duties to others, even though also based on the dignity of human nature, can transcend this primary duty or even conflict with it; for social duties or duties to others generally are conditional on that owed to self. "No good can come to man but through himself. Likewise, no harm can come to him but through himself. By no possible chance can aught befall a man that hath not its origin or cause within the individual himself. All which he experiences is for his good. When he learns this he will then no more shun penalty, pain and death, so-called." These are sentiments moving one naturally to the position which Kant is expressing in so formal a manner.

In the case, for example, of our duty to speak the truth (or the opposite, as it may be) to a murderer who asks us whether our friend, of whom he is in pursuit, has taken refuge in our house;[3] the question at issue is whether the ordinary duty to self, and to the humanity represented in our person, is of greater or less obligation than the duty to preserve a fellow-being's life. From the Stoic standpoint the question is easily answered: the former duty is unconditional, and to be although indirectly the cause of another's death is not so bad as to violate the absolute duty to uphold

the dignity of a man. And how is death an evil? "Anytus and Melitus are able indeed to kill me, but they cannot harm me."

There is an alternative in the case of veracity which strangely is not often discussed. It is taken for granted that one must answer, yes or no, when such a question as that just discussed is put to him. But why answer at all? If one *will* keep silence, there is nothing to make him speak. In that case neither an extreme regard for a formal law will lead one to harm the guiltless even indirectly; nor will his duty to himself be violated by a departure from truth. But that, it is objected, endangers one's own life. What of that? "Is not to die better than to lead an evil life?" And it is observable that men's liking is more toward a dead hero than a living coward. This alternative merely changes the venue, so to speak; it does not affect the question of the unconditional nature of the duty to veracity.

The general standpoint of moralists of Kant's type is that of the second statement of the categorical imperative, that humanity in one's own person and in that of every other is to be treated as an end in itself. Beginning with the opinion that goodness resides in the will, and that things beyond control are ethically indifferent, it is but a step, an imperceptible one often, to the conception of humanity as an end in itself. Inevitably, however, one in this position comes to regard certain actions as the embodiment of the absolute virtue which it is duty to attain. There is no more logical justification for it than for the opposite, and yet as a fact, those who have asserted the singular goodness of the will have likewise held to the universal validity of certain precepts. One would think that the very idea of a will would lead to the opposite conception; that is, to the opinion that if one is conciously acting from regard to humanity he may reverse the maxim of his will whenever the good of human-

ity seems to call for it. For if the law is to be obeyed for its own sake, though to be sure the Good Will is necessary at every step, the goodness of the will is, notwithstanding, of secondary value, being good only as a means to the attainment of consistency; the man is regarded as made for the law, not the law for the man.

The position I wish now to state—which puts man above the law—holds that even in such a case as lying, whose interdiction is undoubtedly conceived commonly as implanted, one is not to judge by the consistency or inconsistency with the law, but as to the probability *whether Good Will may not have prompted the departure from truth.* For if Good Will has prompted it, the law has been fulfilled, without regard to the fact that there may be an inconsistence with a previous maxim. Suppose a person finds a trusted friend has deceived him: is it a higher principle to judge by the mere law, or to take into consideration that, on account of the previously known character of the deceiver, more than likely the deception is meant for the ultimate good of the one deceived? Is not the latter mode a greater exaltation of the Good Will? does it not put a higher value on man as an end than that which would sacrifice him to a formula? From this point of view, therefore, it is affirmed that *to trust a friend, to put faith in man, and thereby to show a good will, is of greater praise than to uphold consistency with a law to the condemnation of good intentions.*

Stoicism, however, has never taken this position, but has chosen to consider the goodness of the will as lying in consistency. The Self loses its primary importance; from life is taken its sacredness, and in place of a principle we have a formula. For the preservation of this formula, life itself is to be sacrificed; and the world agrees in its admiration of such sacrifice. For the grandeur of Stoicism, and the reason for its tendency to formalize, may be explained from

this very belief, that *simply because a man is worth so much, he should strive to attain to perfect agreement with the dicta of Duty.* Consistency, the manifestation of Duty the most difficult, is mistaken for the thing itself, and whenever a Stoic speaks of the law he means the formula, the shell, of the law.[5]

This position is avowedly Kant's at the very start; when, therefore, he brings in the conception of the end, it is by a reversal of the road taken by the Stoic—for the Greek the end was everything. Each, however, finally arrived at a postulation of *actions* as good in themselves, which we shall find Kant doing in his treatment of the *summum bonum.* His primary position had been that the Good Will is the highest good, and this he now affirms of Virtue as an element of the *summum bonum.* But there is nothing in his later exposition to denote that the possession of a Good Will and Virtue were identified in his thought; that is to say, in the time between the two expositions Virtue had gravitated from the position of a quality of mind to one of action. In this frame of mind the doing of certain actions and the not doing of others become the objects of unconditional commands; life, regarded as sacred more strongly by modern Ethics than by any other, becomes ethically indifferent; and in contrast with it, it becomes impossible to argue for the occasional rightfulness of lying, stealing, killing, unchastity, or to make the opposite duties conflict.

The Individual being the highest end, consistency with self as this end becomes paramount duty. It is impossible, however, to find anything in an empty *à priori* form with which to be consistent. We can, nevertheless, calculate the effect if every one did either of two contrary acts; that one is right which will best promote the Ideal Society, the Kingdom of Ends, as that best promotes the ideal man; that is, "*morality consists in the reference of all action to the legislation which alone can render a kingdom of ends possible.*"[6] For a test of

duty, therefore, Kant is compelled to leave the form of the law, but yet finds it in the realm of the *à priori* and unconditioned; for the kingdom of ends is altogether an Idea of pure reason.

On the above principle one may will as he pleases; it will soon become apparent that certain volitions can be willed ethically while others (also universals) cannot. In short, universality is not a test of rightness, and the form of the law must be abandoned for the form (sense) of duty. This conclusion is fully elucidated by Kant himself in the third Theorem and the appended Remark, but he conceals from himself by phraseology an outcome which destroys one of his most important though not fundamental doctrines, the necessity for outward consistency.

The Analytic of Pure Practical Reason

The first part of the Critique merely reiterates the position of the Grundlegung, that all material principles are empirical, hence can furnish only maxims of advice, not universal laws; that such principles place the determining principle of the will in the lower desires, and in demanding a material end (the satisfaction of those desires) place themselves under the head of self-love. Contrariwise, the opinion is reasserted that a maxim can be a law and moral only when it determines the will by its form.

Ethics in Kant's conception is necessarily a science of Laws; it must command, and that it may do so must be based on the sense of duty. Ethics cannot merely state what ends are worthy of attainment, then describe the means to their accomplishment and dub such description a "law." There must be a *command;* and in the phrase "determination by the form of the law" we must, to understand its full significance, put the weight of emphasis on *law* with all that the word can imply. The reason for this is found in his

conception of the relation of Reason and Desire. Duty is not simply what one *ought* to do—he sometimes loses sight of this essential—but is also what one does not *desire* to do. Except in his treatment of the *summum bonum* Kant does not seem to have been able to conceive of a duty being desirable, and the realization of that element of the *summum bonum* which is desirable he afterwards denies to be a duty. An Ethics which does not contain as its chief element (and this is the characteristic of all hedonistic systems) the fact of *law*, of a law commanding by the *idea* of law (the sense of duty) is no Ethics at all.

The law of which Ethics treats, we have already learned, to be a law of pure practical reason must be necessary, universal and unconditioned. Such a law can proceed only from pure reason à priori, and can be nothing but the *concept* of a law. It governs by an ill-defined *feeling of oughtness*.

These requirements being regarded as postulates not needing proof, Theorem I. proceeds from them to assert that all practical principles which presuppose an object (matter) of the faculty of desire as the ground of determination of the will are empirical and can furnish no practical laws.[7] For such principles cannot be based on the *idea* of a law, inasmuch as they presuppose an object of sensible intuition; nor can they be universal and unconditioned.

An object of sensible intuition, pre-supposed as determinant of the will, can bear no relation to the subject except through a feeling of pleasure in the realization of the object. As a result we have Theorem II., that all material practical principles as such are of one and the same kind, and come under the general principle of self-love or private happiness.[8] In doing so they violate all the conditions of a law except that of necessity, and this necessity is not one of reason (and consequently not formal), but a material necessity of sensible

nature. In this theorem Kant definitely limits the name material to theories and principles which pre-suppose an object of the faculty of *desire*. Properly he had no right to do this, as any prineiple which pre-supposes an object is material, without regard to the faculty of which it is an object.

It follows from Theorem I. that material practical principles being unable to furnish ethical laws, a rational being cannot regard his maxims as universal laws unless he conceives them as principles which determine the will not by their matter, but by their form only (Theorem III.).[9] For only a form can proceed *à priori* from pure reason, and only a concept thought *à priori* can serve as an unconditioned and universal law. Kant's proof of Theorem III. is thus stated: The matter is the object of the will. Either this is the determining ground of the will or it is not. In the former case, the rule of the will cannot be a law, as it would be empirical (Theorem I.). If the matter be subtracted, there is nothing left but the bare form, the idea, of a law. Hence either one cannot regard his maxims as laws at all, or he must conceive them as such by virtue of their form only. Kant immediately subjoins in a remark, however, that not every form of maxim is fit to serve as a law. He proceeds to show that the desire for happiness is universal, but is not on that account a universal law. This specific case may be explained on other grounds, but notwithstanding, it remains true that Kant shows conclusively that a formal maxim is not necessarily a universal law.

This position of Kant's, that a formal maxim is not *ey ipso* a universal law, is capable of two interpretations. He may have here seen that a maxim may have the *form* of a law without conveying the *idea* of a law; in other words, that a mandate having all the formal appearance of a law may be directed to a person without his being in the least impelled

by a sense of duty (the idea of law) to obey the command. Or, in the second place (what is really the same thing), he may have had an inkling of the distinction before made between Law and Duty, that the former commands the same thing always, the latter need not. In either case it is shown that to universalize a maxim is not thereby to make it moral.

If the law must be the *à priori* product of the reason, it is impossible to conceive it as given (commanded) to any one except the being from whom it proceeds, for it cannot be regarded in its pure state, and its necessity would be disproven, did one have to wait till the law be given him. In short, from the requirement that the law be *à priori*, the *Autonomy* of the will follows as a matter of course (Theorem IV.).[10]

Following the *à priority* of the law, the sole principle of morality must "consist in the independence on all matter of the law (namely, a desired object), and in the determination of the elective will by the mere universal legislative form [idea] of which its maxim must be capable." This gives us a negative and a positive view of the same fact of freedom: the former being the independence on the matter of the law; the latter, the self-legislation of a being by pure practical reason. Nevertheless, the matter of the law need not be expunged (even were it possible) in order to obtain autonomy: only the matter must not be present as the *condition of the possibility* of the law. Every volition must have an object; but this is not necessarily the determining principle of the will. Thus, one may will the happiness of others, but only on condition he will it as a universal, and not for the sake of the happiness."

If the principle of morality maintained by Kant is one of *à priori* Autonomy, and we grant that reason can give rise to but one *à priori* principle, all other theories may be grouped as heteronomous.[11] It does not follow, however, that all other theories are material and seek the satisfaction of

the inclinations. The Moral Sense theory, for instance, had as its chief characteristic that it asserted the existence of a sense whose only object was to determine one to action immediately without reference to personal advantage of any sort. It was thus as strong a protest against Egoistic Hedonism as Kantianism itself. According to Hutcheson, self-interest cannot be the sole moral motive; it can merely be added to the motive to give zest to the pursuit of virtue.[13] Moral Sense, he says, is the power of receiving "other perceptions of moral actions than those of advantage."[14] "The virtuous agent is never apprehended by us as acting only from views of his own interest, but as principally influenced by some other motive."[15] Wherein the Moral Sense theory is heteronomous, according to Kantian principles, is in placing its fundamental principle in sensibility instead of the reason. Indeed, the moral sense is similar to "Respect" in Kant's system in many respects (not the least of which is that they are both independent of the will); Kant himself makes the comparison.

In the case also of the "Will of God" theory, it is not a desired object that determines the will; and it also is not material. For religious teachers, Hebrew and Christian, have constantly maintained that the law is not fulfilled when executed for some object beyond the mere law, or the will of God conceived as law. Its heteronomy must be sought therefore in another principle: this is the fact that while the law is a pure moral mandate, yet it is not possible to be willed *à priori* by the rational being himself; since its very conception is that it is given from without.

In both these cases it is quite possible that, if an adherent of one of them were asked wherefore he acted as he did, he could give no other reason than, for the pleasure he expected therefrom (save that in the Moral Sense theory the will is not free, and there can of course be no "wherefore"). But

the distinguishing characteristic of the two systems is that they never (till Paley's time, perhaps) asked themselves this question, for inability to answer which Kant has rejected them.

Kant's refutation of the theory of Perfection is a matter of definitions. With him perfection "is the fitness or sufficiency of a thing for all sorts of purposes,"[16] ability to do something which must on this account be of superior value. In the end, however, he adopts perfection as "an end which is also a duty," and in so doing sets aside the above definition for the broader conception of it as the conquest of will over animal nature, and as a specific mode of realizing humanity as an end in itself." Indeed, no other interpretation can be given to the second formula of the categorical imperative than that it commands perfection as an unconditional duty.

Returning over the theorems which we have outlined, we observe that in the first, Kant makes the mistake of thinking that every "presupposed object of the faculty of desire" is necessarily presupposed as *the ground of determination of the will*, that "to presuppose an object which gives pleasure is to presuppose it *for* its pleasure." Not only is this a mistake in itself; it also cuts off Kant's principle from its only means of becoming more than empty. A principle, to be more than a principle; to be, that is, the determinator of the will, necessarily presupposes an object towards which the will is to be motived. In order to preserve the purity of Duty as a moral motive in this case Kant saw clearly that the object must not be sought *on account of* its desirability. But it is, to say the least, essentially erroneous to think that the form can have any importance apart from the matter concerned in the judgment. The law of duty may be necessary and universal, but it can have no application when formulated out of relation to the matter to which man's duty extends. Let the law command consistency with self, or

with the law, or the realization of an object outside the self, or what you please, in any case it presupposes the matter given in experience to tell what duty is *at any one time*. Kant is trying in ethics, as has been said of his Deduction of the Categories in the Critique of Pure Reason, to solve a problem by means of the intellect alone, which belongs as essentially to the matter with which intellect deals. In order to preserve the purity of the law as a motive, it was necessary to abstract from the pleasure inherent in the attainment of its object; it was not necessary, it was ruinous, to rule out the object altogether.

It is not against pleasure as an object that Kant is contending, but as a moral motive, a principle of determination of the will. He has no puritanical objections to happiness in itself. But the strange fact is that he recognized that an object may be sought without being desired for itself, *i. e.*, being made a determining principle of the will;[18] but, except in one fleeting instance,[19] he refused to see further that *pleasure may inhere in this object, and not be the determining principle*. That the "principle of self-love" determines the will by a desire for a *specific* object is undoubtedly the opinion that is uppermost in his mind in stating the second theorem. But, however ignoble the principle of self-love is, it is not at all true that a specific end may not be made the object of the will and not fall under the head of this principle. The happiness of all is a universal and formal, and as such may be the ground of determination of the will. One's own happiness is necessarily included in the universal happiness. Now it is our duty to realize the *summum bonum*, but not to make it the determining principle of the will. In the same way one may realize his own happiness, making universal happiness the determining maxim of the will. Presented in this way there is no conflict between autonomy and the realization of private happiness *as an end*. This point of view,

however, it never seems to occur to Kant to take (except in the one instance noted); but he always takes the stand that the being seeking an object whose realization is pleasure, must be determined by the pleasure or by the object as pleasant.

The Deduction of the Principles of Pure Practical Reason

The theorems of which we have sketched the outline are the principles of pure practical reason (corresponding to the principles of the pure understanding in the first Critique). It is next necessary to substantiate the principles for analysis; and as Kant has "finally reduced the definite conception of morality to the idea of freedom,"[2] his task reduces itself to the necessity of establishing the objective reality of this concept. The great difficulty in accomplishing this object arises from the fact that there are no sensible intuitions giving rise to the idea of freedom, and its reality cannot on that account be proven by showing it in examples drawn from experience. Nor indeed can the existence of the moral law or of freedom be proven at all by theoretical reason. The existence of the law is a fact, and requires no ground of justification; it is absolute. If the law exists, freedom is a reality: there can be no duty and no law, if there be no power of obeying the law.[3] The proof of the objective reality of freedom draws with it that of the existence of a supersensible world; for the very concept of freedom is of a causality independent on physical causation.

With the acceptance of the objective reality of freedom we have an idea of the causality which has got into the mind by other means than through the category of causality. Inasmuch, therefore, as its positive conception is one of nothing more nor less than a kind of causality, freedom is itself a category. It is not an instance of causation abstracted from sense-percepts and subsumed under a category; it is

a form, a concept of causation, and ranks with the category itself.

Is this category a function of the understanding, a form of conceiving, as are the others? That it is, Kant infers from the impossibility of thinking oneself to be other than free. As in our relation with the ordinary objects of sense, we cannot think except we conceive them as *caused;* so in forming our conception of rational beings, we cannot think any such unless we conceive them as *free.* Only on the supposition of freedom's reality can the moral law be possible; for this is the condition which is included in every conception of the moral law, that the concept of responsibility (the law) has no application except to a being whom we judge to be free.

What is the "objective reality" which is predicated of the idea of freedom? Is it the reality of a notion, of a category, of a (Platonic) Idea, or of a thing to be realized but not now existing? There are many considerations in favor of the last view; but undoubtedly if the faculty of freedom is a category, it has the same reality as a category. The concept of freedom is therefore a functional activity of the Understanding. In sensible experience we do not intuite a notion of cause; we see a chain of events and *cannot help thinking causality* to be present; exactly so, when we see a man doing his duty we cannot help thinking freedom to be there. This, it will be observed, does not prove the existence of freedom as a spontaneous cause, but only that its conception is a form of judgment to which we refer moral actions; that is, that we cannot think in moral matters without assuming it. Nevertheless the only ultimate proof of the *fact* of freedom is this necessity.

Exactly what Kant would understand by the "fact" of freedom is very hard to decide. If it is only an idea as he says, what influence can it have as a *cause?* Granted there is a functional activity of the understanding by which

we are compelled to think man as free, of what importance is that if it does not give him the power of influencing *phenomenal* events? Kant apparently believes in the will as a spontaneous cause and as a power of alternative choice, but that it has no influence on *actions*, as they are phenomena; after the will has made its choice *the succession of natural events goes on as though the will did not exist.* On the other hand, he assumes continually that freedom is a causality in the same sense as cause in the physical world. This is shown in the thesis (though he did not necessarily accept that) of the third Antinomy, wherein it is shown that a free cause is necessary to explain phenomena, and phenomena are subject to physical causation; and again he says that freedom is the power man has of controlling his appetites, in other words, of interfering in the course of natural causation.[92] Apparently, therefore, from the point of view of actual experience, the matter of Ethics, Kant's freedom of the will is a piece of logical humor. When he says, for instance, that "a being that cannot act except with the idea of freedom is bound by the same laws that would oblige a being who was actually free,"[93] it does not seem to occur to him to ask, What *is* such a law and what effect can it have on the life of the being it obligates? Such freedom would be an illusion, and this argument is one to delight the heart of a determinist. By limiting freedom to the intelligible world he denied the possibility of free causality in the phenomenal world, and thus affirmed the antithesis of the third Antinomy. Cutting off the freedom of the will from phenomena prevented his holding to a belief in alternative choice; to which, however, he sometimes inconsistently gives expression.

These difficulties are left unsolved by the "Deduction" and prevent one's accepting the arguments and conclusions of that section. But it would be a mistake to conclude that

Kant has left his doctrine in this perilous position; from which he finally rescues it in the "Critical Examination of the Analytic."[94]

It will be observed that in the preceding criticism I have assumed that man as *noumenon* and man as *phenomenon* can have no possible interrelation. Such, however, is not Kant's conception. *Homo noumenon* and *homo phenomenon* are two utterly irreducible elements of the one man, but they *are* only *one* man. *They act indissolubly and together* through the organic unity of the individual. I have been supposing them to be two beings bound up in one body, but having no organic relation at all; each doing its work and interfering not at all with the other. They are, on the other hand, one and the same being: *noumenon* is the man *out of time*, phenomenon is the man *in time*. Under this conception, what does Freedom mean? Freedom is the power the Reason has of *pre*-determining the part which the will *as a spontaneous cause* shall take in the *course* of events. *Before* an event occurs, the reason can forecast it with some degree of accuracy, and decide that it will use its causality in one direction or another. The reason, therefore, acts out of (before) time, and for it to be determinable in time is a contradiction of its definition as a *deliberative* faculty. Reason asks always, What *next?* and not, What am I doing *now?* The latter is the business of consciousness (spontaneity). Reason is the faculty of deliberation; will is a spontaneous cause: combine the two notions organically and we have the *deliberative* will, the *practical* reason. As a phenomenon, one belongs in the chain of cause and effect; consciousness is the power of acting spontaneously (from within); reason is the power of directing this spontaneity in a certain channel, *subject to the laws of causation*: the whole makes of a rational finite being *a free cause*.

The Concept of an Object of pure practical Reason.

In the Introductory Section of this essay we have mentioned Kant's definition of Ethics as the science of Ends. Its very conception, therefore, entails an *object;* but only an object of thought, an Ideal existing as a form in the conception of the Reason. Under this conception we may include two of the Ideas of Reason, Freedom and God. One notion of freedom is of a continually progressive state; for the will though desiring to be free from the influence of the inclinations can only gradually attain that end, and never thoroughly in this life. Of God two general conceptions may be found in the Ethics: God as Perfection[25] and as Supreme Dispenser of Happiness. This is material perfection however, not a quality of will, and Kant denies that it is an ethical end, though this opinion is held by some theosophists.[26] It is an Idea but not an Ideal of Reason. The same is true of the Idea of Immortality; it is not an end, valuable in its own worth, but is existence in that amount of time necessary to perfection.

Leaving out of view, therefore, these Ideas, an Ideal, an object of pure practical reason, is an effect possible to be produced through freedom; and is, therefore, only an *idea* existing in the intelligible world. The only objects of practical reason are those of good and evil. The Ideal of course must be the former; more specifically (as we learn in the Metaphysic of Ethics) they are one's own perfection and the happiness of others.[27]

In the treatment of the object as an element of formal morality, we have a somewhat different conception of morality as a whole. The forms treated of in the Grundlegung are presuppositions necessary to the very conception of morality. The formal *object* on the other hand is the *matter* of the will. As such it must be excluded from pure morality; for the goodness of the volition will be destroyed if the

will be determined by desire for the object. Nevertheless, an object is a necessary presupposition, and in so far it is formal. But though an end was found in the Grundlegung, it was humanity as an absolutely worthy end. Now Kant succeeds later in showing to his own satisfaction that to treat humanity as an end, is to will one's own perfection and others' happiness, but it is only by a stretch of the imagination that we can believe him to be meaning the same thing in both cases. For in the first case morality pertains to will only; in the Critique it is *actions* which are *good in themselves*, if they are produced by a will determined by the universal law."[28] This statement is the mark in the progress of Kant's theory from the abstract to the concrete. At first the practical reason had been concerned, in his conception, only with the determination of the will without regard to ends. Then an end was introduced, the conception of Man as an end in himself. Here the last step is made, where reason is employed for the determination of causes to effects in the sensible nature of man, his physical welfare being advanced by practical reason (besides, as formerly, by the theoretical); and where actions, ends outside Humanity, are denominated as good in themselves. "The moral law commands me to make the highest possible good in a *world* the ultimate object of all my conduct."[29] Although this may refer to the good only of the rational beings in the world, yet the general impression at this time is that his conception of good has broadened, and this opinion is strengthened by the classification of certain actions as absolute good. Kant himself seems to realize this tendency and its necessity, especially in the section on the Typic, where he speaks of "special difficulties arising from this, that a law of freedom [super-physical causality] is to be applied to actions which belong to physical nature."[30]

Although it is a duty to realize the good as an ethical end,

yet its concept must not be determined before the moral law, but only after it and by means of it. For the action is good in itself but not on account of itself (through any intrinsic worth of its own), that is, its performance is a duty, but only because by means of the law we learn that it is good. The only way to prevent heteronomy, therefore, is to determine by the law what action is to be done, and its goodness will follow because it conforms to the law. Therefore, the notions of good and evil do not originally refer at all to objects (as do the categories), but to the volition whose goodness is, as it were, transferred to the action without regard to the pleasure or pain experienced in it.

What are the actions to accomplish which a will, however determined, must exercise its volition? Plainly those only of the sensible world. That is, our formal object of the will must be filled, if at all, with matter supplied to the moral judgment by sensibility according to laws of natural causation in the phenomenal world. Now as freedom has nothing to do with the causation of phenomena, it may very well happen that an act determined on according to the law of duty is *not possible as a matter of fact*. In such a case how are we to judge of failure to accomplish a moral end? The solution of the difficulty, says Kant, is found in the fact that having once determined his volition in accordance with the law, a rational being is not responsible for the outcome of the event, whether it be according as he has willed or not.[a] The question brings out an important fact however, that Kant recognises that the general conception of the good is not fit to serve as matter of the will; its matter must come from the [illegible] of sense experience. In recognition of this fact it is necessary to state the categorical imperative in terms of natural causation, thus: ask yourself whether, if the action you propose were to take place by a law of nature, you could regard it as possible by your own will.[b]

This is the *Type* of the *moral* law. For instance, I see a man killed by accident. Judging from it as a fact of nature, I conclude that it would be as evil morally to *will* myself to commit such an act as it is for it to happen unintentionally in the course of events. Of the Type of the law it is to be observed, that being formal and universal it is as empty as we have already seen the categorical imperative to be, and consequently it is impossible to draw trustworthy conclusions from it.

The Motives of Pure Practical Reason

In the Grundlegung,[33] Kant has distinguished between the spring (Triebfeder) as the subjective ground of desire, and the motive or objective ground of volition (Bewegungsgrund). Chapter III. of the Critique is on the "springs" of pure practical reason. This is translated "motives" by Abbott, Kant having altered his terms; for he has already said that a volition resting on a spring is *material*, but now treats of such as formal. He is therefore using the word spring in the same sense that he previously used motive.

If an act rests on feeling (Triebfeder) it may conform to the law, but will possess only legality.[34] To be moral it must find its ground of determination (motive, Bewegungsgrund) in the form of the law. In maintaining this Kant asserts that the form can and must be both objective and subjective ground of determination of the will. In filling these two offices, it is dangerous to allow other motives (for instance, that of interest as upheld by Hutcheson) to co-operate with the sense of Duty. The essential point of all determination of the will by the law is that as a free will it is determined simply by the law without the co-operation of sensible impulses and even to the rejection of all such.[35]

In withdrawing from the aid of such impulses or in combatting their influence, the action of the law as a motive is only negative; the succeeding feeling may be called a pain.

Consequently, as law as a motive can be known *à priori* only, we have a case in which we can from *à priori* considerations determine the relation of a cognition to a feeling of pleasure or pain.

All inclinations, regarded as material motives, constitute self-regard. This is either self-love (selfishness) or satisfaction with oneself (self-conceit). There is a self-love which on account of its reasonableness is only checked by the pure practical reason. Self-conceit, on the other hand, the law strikes down altogether, and in so doing commands *respect*. Respect thus becomes the only feeling known *à priori*, being the result of an intellectual cause.

The moral law performs three offices:[36] it is the *formal* determining principle of action by means of practical reason; as such it informs the subject of the law that his volition must conform to what the sense of duty directs him to perform. The law is also a *material* and objective determining principle of the objects of actions in so far as in willing it is to be decided whether they are good or evil; that is, the law is capable of denoting *what* ends are good or the opposite. The statement of these two offices are a reiteration of the first two formulae of the categorical imperative, and corresponds to the division of a maxim into a form (its universal validity) and a matter (its end).[37] Besides these, the law, as it produces a feeling, respect for itself, is also a *subjective* determining principle, a *motive* to action. It is a motive which deprives the will of every material spring, taking "from self-love its influence, and from self-conceit its illusion." The law is the objective moral motive; the subjective motive is respect for the law.[38]

Respect applies to persons, not to things. It is "a *tribute* which we cannot refuse to merit, whether we will or not."[39] Although a feeling, it is one neither of pleasure nor pain: the former is shown in the fact that we yield to it reluctantly,

and always endeavor to reduce the credit due a man for his morality. That it is not painful is known to those who have risen far enough above self-conceit to contemplate the law in its majesty. In motivation of the will through respect for the law, the will is first determined objectively and directly; freedom restricts the influence of the inclinations, and thus produces a feeling of displeasure, which can be known *à priori* from the moral law. The feeling of displeasure, however, is itself a sign of the ascendancy of the law over material considerations, and is followed by respect for the law. Respect (all pathological obstacles having been removed) thus becomes the motive of the will; but only to objects approved by the sense of duty. An action according to the law following on motivation through respect is duty; which includes in its conception obligation, a determination to actions without regard to the reluctance felt in doing them. That is, obligation is the duty arising from the necessity that the will be determined by the law; duty, however, is a broader conception and includes with this moral determination the necessity of objective agreement of the *action* with the law.[40]

The strongest argument that can be brought against the moral sense theory (and it applies more forcibly to more egoistic schools) is that it disregards the necessity of *constraint* by a sense of duty to check the inclinations, as human nature is constituted and must ever remain so long as physical human nature endures. We can never be quite free from desires and inclinations, and on that account "stand under a *discipline* [a restraint] of reason, and in all our maxims must not forget our subjection to it, nor withdraw anything therefrom, or by an egotistic presumption diminish aught of the authority of the law (although our own reason gives it) so as to set the determining principle of our will, even though the law be conformed to, anywhere else but in the law itself and in respect for this law. Duty and obligation are the

only names that we must give to our relation to the moral law."[41] If constraint of the faculty of desire can be got only through a discipline of *reason*, then that is a sufficient justification for the rationalistic standpoint, for the view that the attainment of morality depends on the presence in the agent of a sense of responsibility, which must determine the will by presenting its moral principles as unconditioned *laws*.

In what is the basis of this Duty which governs rational nature? It can spring from "nothing less than a power which elevates man above himself (as a part of the world of sense)," which connects him with an order (conceivable only to the intellect) which commands the sensible world. "This power is nothing but *personality*,"[42] and personality is independence on the mechanism of nature and also the faculty of a being which is subject to laws given by its own reason. Duty, that is, can be the offspring of reason alone; it is a form, an idea, not a sense as English-speaking people have chosen to regard it.

This then is the nature of the true motive of pure practical reason; it can be nothing else than a product, a conception, of the reason itself. It is no other than the pure moral law, inasmuch as that makes us conscious of the sublimity of our own supersensible existence and subjectively produces respect for our higher nature.[43]

One cannot fail to observe in Kant's conception of respect for the law an analogy to the moral sense of Hutcheson. Many of Kant's statements as to what respect is *not* seem directly aimed at Hutcheson's description of the attributes and office of the moral feeling, with a view to denying its validity and truthfulness. The two feelings are both independent of the will and both act without any relation to pleasure or pain, neither being connected with objects of intuition. Reverence for the majesty of the law is called forth in the midst of, and even by, displeasure at the baffling of

lust; Moral Sense compels love toward the benefactor of his fellow-man even when the benefaction is a deprivation of interest to one's self. Kant grants that being a feeling, respect cannot give rise to the idea of duty, which is necessary to moral experience; in Hutcheson's case, duty is done away with as Moral Sense is a faculty immediately leading men to love the good for its own sake. Reverence is known *à priori, but only as an effect*, being involuntarily produced by a conception of the moral law; Moral Sense, on the other hand, is regarded as *an implanted faculty* of perceiving immediately the goodness of an act.

The Dialectic of Pure Practical Reason

The Dialectic of practical reason arises from a controversy as to the object of the will. The practical reason must have an object on which to act, but must not be determined thereby. The proper and only moral object is the Good. The time has now come to define the Good, and it is in doing so that reason falls into controversy; for practical reason (the will) is an element of the faculty of desire, whose object is happiness. The end of the will, considered as reason, is virtue. In deciding on the constituents of the true moral object, we must decide on the relation of these two elements, Virtue and Happiness.

According to Stoic doctrine, virtue is its own reward. This may mean either one of two things: that happiness is not a state worthy of man, he should be above trying to be happy; or else that happiness is included in the very notion of virtue, and that one may test his happiness by this, that if he is virtuous, he is certain to be happy; if he is not virtuous, his happiness is a delusion. Kant denies both of these theses, and his position differs from the Stoic's radically in this, that *he denies positively that one can be moral and at the same time seek either virtue or happiness.* His Ethics is properly

a denial of both Stoic and Epicurean doctrine, and the reason he aimed his remarkable assault against the latter only was not chiefly his hatred of hedonism, but because in his day no other end but happiness was dwelt upon as of value; no one thought of determining himself by the amount of virtue to be gained. He wished to defend virtue by denying that it or anything else was a moral end; by maintaining that Ethics is concerned with *purpose*, not with *ends*.

When we take these facts into consideration we understand Kant's position in the Dialectic much more clearly. His attack on pleasure in the Analytic included in its range virtue also, *in so far as they are both determining principles of the will;* as anything else he had attacked neither pleasure nor virtue. When, therefore, he speaks of the Good as the object of practical reason, he does not mean the end which one *ought* to seek, but *that which inevitably follows on obedience to the law.*

Now every one acknowledges that true obedience to the law brings virtue; and the Stoics alleged that consciousness of its attainment is happiness. Kant's conception of the relation of reason and sense forbids his taking this view; virtue in his opinion does not include happiness any more than happiness includes virtue. Nevertheless he is not ready in ascetic fashion to renounce happiness, but, on the contrary, asserts that happines is a true element of the *Summum Bonum.*

Virtue is a good, the highest (*summum*) good. But *summum* is used in two senses: it may denote the condition which is itself unconditioned (supreme); or, the whole which is not part of a greater whole of the same kind (perfect). Virtue is the *supreme* good; but in the real *summum bonum*, the *perfect* good, reason demands that happiness be included. Virtue is not alone "the object of the desires of rational finite beings; for this requires *happiness* also, and

that not merely in the partial eyes of the person who makes himself an end, but even in the judgment of an impartial reason."[44] The reason here spoken of is not the reason previously conceived as opposed to sense; it is reason from the point of view of the organic unity of the individual demanding that the sensible nature be not excluded from the moral world, but that a synthesis, a causal nexus, be made between the objects of the natural and the rational man, between happiness and virtue.

The *summum bonum*, according to the *à priori* cognition of reason, contains both virtue and happiness. As Kant has denied the Stoics' conception of the relation between them, (which was analytic), and as their connection is cognized *à priori*, it must be synthetic, one of cause and effect. Herein lies the dilemma: either the desire for happiness is the motive to maxims of virtue, or maxims of virtue are the efficient cause of happiness. The first thesis is impossible because it contradicts the conclusion of the Analytic that a will which finds its maxims in the desire for happiness is not moral. A desire for happiness may produce good deeds (that is, deeds having the same effect as though prompted by Good Will) but never a virtuous mind. But on the other hand we do not ordinarily conceive of happiness as a result of good principles, but of natural causes acting on the organism without reference to the disposition of the will, or the state of one's mind. Nevertheless—and thus the antinomy is solved—this proposition (that virtue produces happiness), is false only when virtue is considered as a form of causality in the sensible world. But when we consider a rational being as cause in the noumenal world, it becomes possible to think of him as connected with happiness, as effect in the phenomenal world; not immediately, but through the power and goodness of God. The happiness thus produced is naturally not the same as that resulting from indulging the inclinations,

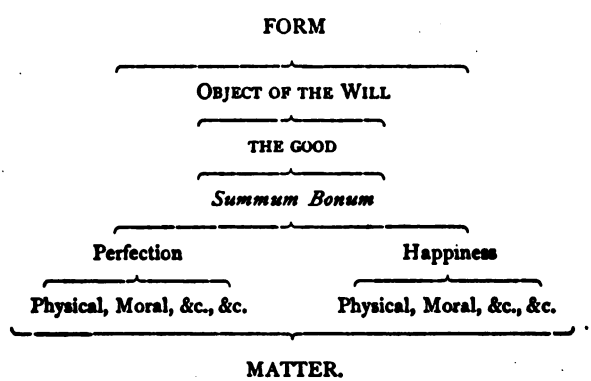
inasmuch as it has no physical cause. It is "the negative satisfaction in one's existence" called *self-contentment*,[45] and in it the dialectic establishes as possible a natural and necessary connection between the consciousness of morality and the expectation of a proportionate happiness as its result.[46]

We have already found a defence of Kant in his introduction of happiness into Ethics in the fact that his attack on it was against it merely as a determining principle of the will. He saw plainly that a pure morality, by which man would accomplish his best, must contain no intimation of pleasure to be gained by one's attainments; for almost inevitably one will allow himself to be motived by desire for an object, and the morality of character will be lost. The law, therefore, must make no promise of pleasure to be gained by obedience. On the other hand, Ethics is a science of Ends, and must in this capacity treat of pleasure; it is no inconsistency to find it causally connected as a result with morality.

Nevertheless there is an inconsistency in Kant's present point of view, namely, in treating happiness as a *moral* good at all. This may be taken in two ways: he meant to deny it to be a moral good only when its maxims are taken as a determining principle of the will. There is nothing, however, that permits us to make this supposition; it is contrary to his whole dualistic standpoint. Or else it was, as mentioned before, a conquest over his dualism in favor of the organic unity of man. In this case—though its logic is undoubtedly weak—it seems to me he can be forgiven for the more common-sense view of things. Moreover it is an inconsistency to introduce even virtue into his system as an *object;* it may be a *result*, but if Duty commands unconditionally not even virtue can be brought in as object, unless it be identified with Duty. To do this is the intention of the second formula of the categorical imperative. But in con-

sidering the *summum bonum* Kant probably had in mind too strongly the Good as thought by the Greeks (a perfecting of the whole man) to remember it as merely an attribute of volitions.

An *object* of the will is a necessary presupposition, but the moment we define this object as "the Good" we have differentiated it and the resulting concept is material. When out of the empty concept of Good we derive one which is *summum bonum*, we have a matter of which the former concept is the form; and this matter in turn is form to the two material concepts of Perfection and Happiness. This is the course Kant takes, and we thus have a progression indefinitely from formal to material, viz:



Here matter and form are used in the logical meaning; and it was by such a progression from indefinite to definite running through his several works that Kant sought to get a content to his formal principle. (He died before he got it.)

Kant's conception of the *summum bonum* as a *necessary* result of a morally-determined volition demanded that one's own happiness be included in it.[47] This, however, was contrary to his notion of duty (the *summum bonum's* realization being such), and in the metaphysic of Ethics he concluded

that one ought to seek every one else's happiness, but not his own.[48]

From the necessity of realizing the *summum bonum* and the impossibility of doing so in this life, Kant deduces the fact of Immortality. From the necessity for a cause adequate to reward perfect Virtue with perfect happiness, he arrives at a belief in the existence of God. Of his conception of God and Immortality he gives but little hint; they are both *à priori* Ideas, necessary to the realization of the *summum bonum* but not to the existence of morality, as is Freedom. The belief in immortality on this ground has become a part of the religious consciousness of the day, at least of the part of it called the most "advanced." The principle contained therein is probably the philosophic basis on which arose a belief in the existence of a Purgatory—certainly the most philosophic (when cleared of its superstitions) of current dogmas of the Next World. Of the argument for the existence of God not much notice need be taken. It would have no weight whatever, I am assured, did we not have other foundation for that belief. These Ideas, as such (although not categories, as is Freedom), might have been shown to be functional activities of the understanding; that is, *conceptions which in one form or another we cannot help thinking.* But for freedom there is found a *moral* necessity, and Kant seeks for one for each of these two Ideas. That he has found it for a belief in God I do not think. Certainly a religion such as he evolves from this belief, which looks upon moral laws as divine commands solely because it is found that *God* can dispense happiness as a reward, is as ignoble as any egoistic theory of morals; and this conclusion is the only one I can reach, although he endeavors to show that under this religion one can still be determined by the moral law alone.[49]

[1] *Abbott*, p. 146. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 101. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 361, *et seq.* [4] *Epictetus.*

[5] I would not belittle Stoicism; but have stated its position as it appears to one who considers it as doctrine, separately from the appreciation of its upholders. For the truth is that Stoicism *is* the men who live it. Viewed from the standpoint of them, its empty forms become filled to overflowing with awe-inspiring personality and need no other content.

[6] *Abbott*, p. 52. [7] *Ibid.*, p. 107. [8] *Ibid.*, p. 108.

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 114. [10] *Ibid.*, p. 122. [11] *Ibid.*, p. 123.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 129. [13] Selby-Bigge: *British Moralists*, p. 74.

[14] *Ibid.* [15] *Ibid.*, p. 94. [16] *Abbott*, p. 130.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 297. [18] *Ibid.*, p. 123.

[19] "The conception of the *summum bonum* as a whole . . . includes *my own happiness*, yet it is not this that is the determining principle of the will which is enjoined to promote the *summum bonum*, but the moral law." (*Abbott*, p. 227.) And the same thing is observed again, in almost the same passage, viz., p. 224.

[20] *Abbott*, p. 67. [21] *Ibid.*, p. 137.

[22] *Semple's Translation*, 3d Edition, p. 299. [23] *Abbott*, p. 67.

[24] *Ibid.*, pp. 182–201. [25] *Ibid.*, p. 129. [26] *Ibid.*, p 296.

[27] Nevertheless the object of practical reason as treated of in this chapter, is not the Ideal but *actions* as called good, bad or indifferent in actual experience. The object as Ideal is treated under the head of the *summum bonum*.

[28] *Abbott*. p. 153, [29] *Ibid.*, p. 227. [30] *Ibid.*, p. 160.

[31] *Ibid.*, p. 160. [32] *Ibid.*, p. 161. [33] *Ibid.*, p. 45.

[34] *Ibid.*, p. 164. [35] *Ibid.*, p. 165. [36] *Ibid.*, p. 168.

[37] *Ibid.*, p. 54; supra, p. 25. [38] *Ibid.*, p. 17. [39] *Ibid.*, p. 169.

[40] *Ibid.*, p. 174. Compare with pages 278, 279.

[41] *Ibid.*, p. 175. [42] *Ibid.*, p. 180. [43] *Ibid.*, p. 182.

[44] *Ibid.*, p. 206. [45] *Ibid.*, p. 214. [46] *Ibid.*, p. 215.

[47] *Ibid.*, p. 227 [48] *Ibid.*, p. 296. [49] *Ibid.*, p. 226.

IV

THE METAPHYSIC OF ETHICS

"EVERY volition must have an object, and therefore, a matter," is Kant's declaration in the Critique;[1] and as volition is the psychological subject of Ethics, there must accordingly be an Ethics of Ends. The categorical imperative, according to the form of which one must will in order to be moral, "is not concerned with the matter of the action, its intended result."[2] In the chapter on the Object of Practical Reason, however, we found that there is an end which can conform to the imperative, namely, the realization of the Good. In what this realization will consist is the subject of investigation in the Doctrines of Virtue (Tugendlehre). In so far, therefore, this treatise is on the *matter* of Ethics, and is a continuation of the chapter on the object of practical reason: "If I am bound to make something which lies in the notions of practical reason an end to myself, and therefore besides the formal determining principle of the elective will (as contained in law), to have already a *material* principle, an end which can be opposed to the end derived from sensible impulses: then this gives the notion of an end which is itself a duty."[3] This matter, however, is still an empty *à priori* form (conception) of the reason, and any categorical commanding its realization must be subject to the criticism attaching to every universal form, that it may be formally consistent and not be materially (actually) right.

In considering the matter of morality, Kant divides his subject (Morals) into two parts, Jurisprudence and Ethics

(Rechtslehre and Tugendlehre). The former is entirely formal, and pays no regard to ends. The latter considers ends, but only such as are also virtues. It would seem from this fact that Jurisprudence is a purer doctrine of morality than Ethics; but the contrary is true because (like civil law generally) Jurisprudence places the *spring* in something else than the moral law (*e. g.*, fear of imprisonment).[4] Consequently, Jurisprudence requires only external conformity to the law, legality or morality of *conduct;* Ethics demands the internal morality of character, or action from love of the law. Ethics commands "internal actions," and external actions only when they are required by the internal law of duty.

Ethics considers two ends which are duties: one's own perfection and others' happiness.[5] We cannot reverse these and make others' perfection or our own happiness an end. There are two sorts of perfection: (1) the totality of characteristics which constitute a Thing (material perfection); (2) teleological perfection in the performance of an Act (formal perfection).[6] The latter is the perfection which is a duty. It is the highest reach of the endeavor to overcome the passions, and consequently is cultivation of the *will*, or moral *disposition*. Kant's conception of the will is such that it does not allow him to say that one being can make the cultivation of another's will his end. Nevertheless another can *assist* very materially in attaining the desired end; else there would be no need of parents guarding their children from contaminating circumstances or of teaching them lessons of virtue.

In discussing the question of one's own happiness, it will be noticed Kant does not prove that it is wrong to seek it, but merely says that it is useless to discuss it, because each one of us is *already and inevitably* seeking it.[7] He really does not discuss it as a duty at all, as there is no object in

telling men it is their duty to do that which they are already doing for the pleasure found in it. If, therefore, we change our conception of Duty and consider it solely as what one *ought* to do, without reference to any feeling of reluctance to it, or of pleasure or pain in the doing, we will find the command "Love yourself" to be as formal, *à priori* and necessary as that to love one's neighbor. And this is the more common-sense English view of obligation.[8]

Ethics does not command actions, but gives laws for the maxims of action;[9] it supplies a form by which we may test our maxims to see whether they are moral. In other words, Ethics dictates not specific acts, but *principles*. Jurisprudence, on the other hand, supplies laws for particular actions. As a result, ethical duties are of indeterminate (weiter) obligation; juridical duties are of strict obligation. Ethics gives a law that one shall make his fellow happy, but leaves to his intellect to decide the means thereto. Jurisprudence states a law that commands (or more generally, forbids) that a *specific* act be performed.[10]

[1] *Abbott*, p. 123. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 33. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 291.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 275. Kant calls Jurisprudence a doctrine of external freedom; at the same time it admits of a spring other than the law, *i. e.*, is a heteronomous principle; which is contradictory.

[5] *Abbott*, p. 296. [6] *Ibid.*, p. 297. [7] *Ibid.*, p. 296.

[8] As a matter of fact, reluctance is probably the commonest and best test of duty, but it is only a test; Kant mistook its *ratio cognoscendi* for a *ratio essendi*.

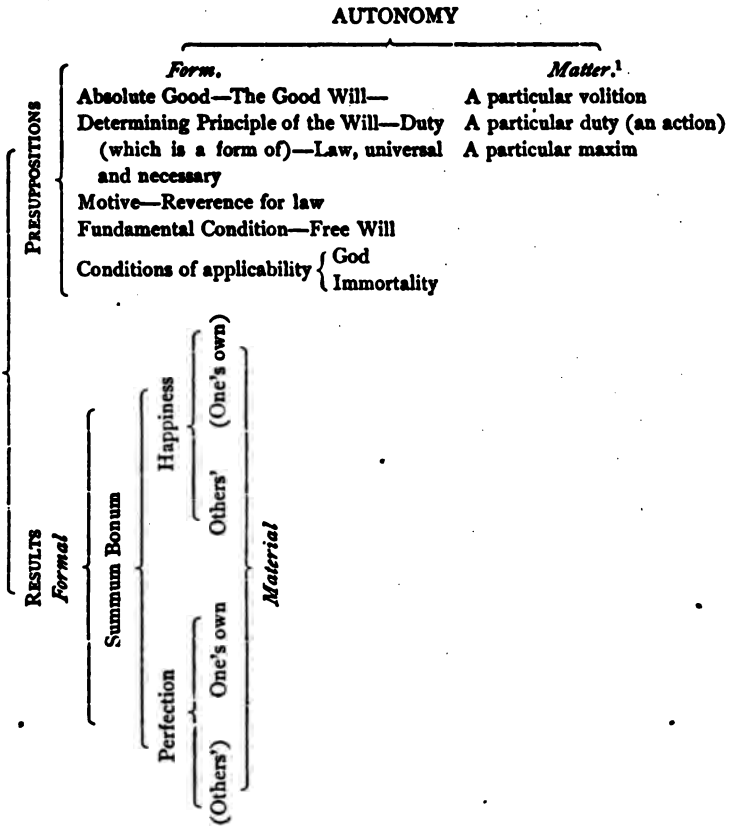
[9] *Abbott*, p. 299.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 300. I have treated only of so much of the "Metaphysic" as is found in Abbott's translation.

V

CONCLUSION

THE elements of the system outlined by Kant may be tabulated thus:



This is the system of *Autonomy*. In applying it in practice one is to choose his maxim according to his sense of

duty (*i. e.*, the idea of law in general); if it can serve as a universal law, the volition and the resulting action are good in themselves. The difference between this system and all others is that the latter can be reduced to *Heteronomy*, *i. e.*, in the last analysis to a system in which the principle by which the will is determined is *a desire for happiness* (a particular). In this system there is no law, and the sole motive is a love of self. Its maxims may or may not conform to the moral law; they cannot be moral. Man is, in Kant's opinion, under the rule of reason; his desires need to be *restrained* by the faculty which can forecast events. On this account all morality takes on the cast of *law*, and its particular ethical form is an unconditioned OUGHT.

The essential of *Heteronomy* is not that its principle proceed from without, but from the sensibility. The principal School of this sort in Kant's time was that of the Moral Sense; of this I have spoken at the beginning of Section III. In the interest of Rationalism Kant attacks this theory, taking as his main thesis that only man's reason, not his sensibility, can from its nature seek the good; and to uphold this, he denies that a *sense* can ever determine man to seek anything but his own happiness. Such an expression as a "*Sense* of Duty" to him is unintelligible. Kant's whole theory, therefore, is based on the opposition between Reason and Sense. On this account he took as an essential of duty what is probably only a temporary symptom, namely its *undesirableness* from the standpoint of the sensibility. On the other hand, as he himself notes, his opponents took too little account of the existing conflict between Interest and Duty; Kant magnified it, they minimized it. The fact of lasting value in Kant's theory is that morality is an attribute of *character;* the important point in the opposing theory is that the ethical conflict is but temporary.

[1] *Heteronomy* is the name given by Kant to any system in which the *matter* is elevated to a *principle.*

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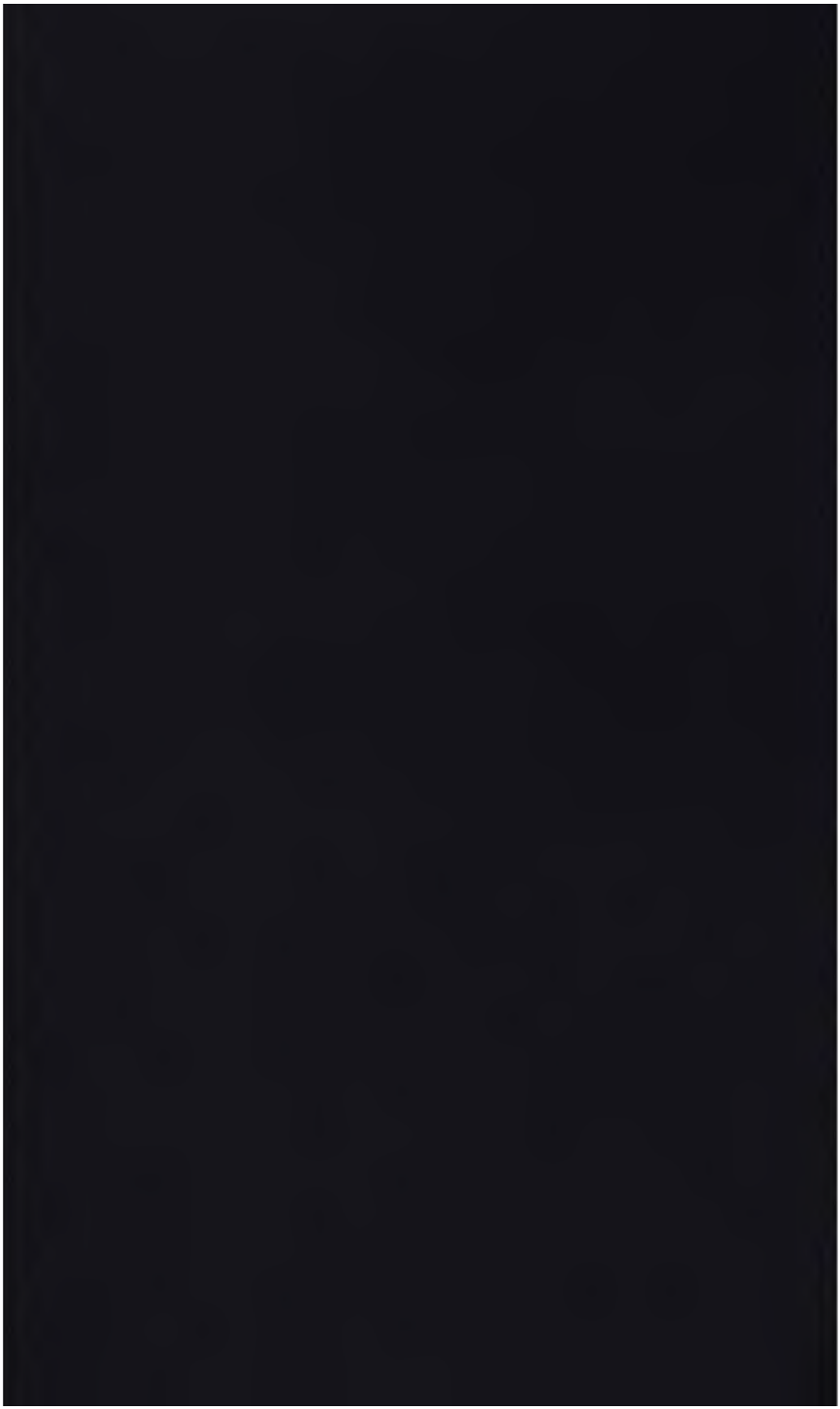

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